

THE
ANTI-INFIDEL
AND
Christian's Magazine.

"It is a duty we owe to God, as the fountain and author of all truth, who is Truth itself, and it is a duty also we owe ourselves, if we deal candidly and sincerely with our own souls, to have our minds constantly disposed to entertain and receive truth wheresoever we meet with it, or under whatever appearance."—*Locke.*

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THE OBJECT OF REVELATION.

In estimating the character of any proposed system, its object and tendency must be included among the moral attestations or disproofs of its alleged authenticity; for as every proposition is supposed to imply a purpose or end, we may, to a considerable extent, determine the former by the nature and influence of the latter. If that which assumes truth has a direct and positive tendency to generate evil; or if the end proposed be insignificant, contemptible, or useless, when compared with the magnitude of the assumption, its credibility is diminished and rendered suspicious. He who pretends to an astounding evidence in proof of that which was previously known; he who vaunts a supernatural interposition to demonstrate that the oak is generated by the acorn, would receive contempt and ridicule as the punishment of presumption. The end would not be compatible with the means.

But in the Christian Revelation the case is very different. Had time been nought but stagnant duration, and man exempt from the destruction of death, no excursive conjecture would have wandered to the future, nor life been darkened by its expected end. We

should have comprehended our destiny, and experience would have supplied all the knowledge that necessity required. But our days are numbered, and our information restricted. That natural existence would terminate, mankind have always been aware; yet to follow the victim of death beyond the tomb, and ascertain whether life was continued or extinct; to determine whether this was the first and final abode of man, or but an incipient stage of future and eternal being, humanity has never had an unaided power. But of all uncertainties, that which relates to existence or destruction must be the most gloomy and terrible, or induce that stubborn apathy which must prevent enjoyment while it suspends apprehension, and render man insensible to happiness as well as to danger. Of the anxiety of mankind to ascertain whether extinction or life should meet them at the grave, we have abundant demonstrations. None of the heathen philosophers ever omitted the inquiry, and whatever was their hypothesis or conclusion, the subject always appeared as one worthy of research and determination. But by far the greater portion of the conjectures, however vague and distorted, inferred immortality, and hoped the existence of man

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hereafter. Not to philosophers, however, was this speculation confined. Tribes unblessed with knowledge, and whose deductions must have arisen from the spontaneous impulse of intuition, allotted to man a life beyond the confines of mortality; and though he was made to inhabit the body of a bird or a beast, the depths of the earth, or the expanse of the air, still was the supposition allied with the instinct of human nature.

To illuminate that which was obscure; to turn doubt into certainty, inference into proof, and relieve the wretchedness of incessant conjecture; to extend the vision of faith where the eye of reason failed, and declare that happiness which hope had sought for in vain; to supply virtue with renovated motive, and appal wickedness by the misery which its commission entails; to change the aspect of humanity, and radiate the prospects of man, was the professed object for which Revelation was made. That such an object is compatible with the cause from which it is alleged to proceed, that it is worthy of any combination of evidence, and proposes the highest human benefit which imagination can draw, none can rationally deny; since to supply that by the best method which is most required, must be benevolent and wise.

The object of Revelation can, therefore, involve nothing repulsive or injurious. It proposes nothing that can offend, nor would effect that which reason would avoid. But though it refers, principally, to the prospective state of man, its assurances and requisitions include the greatest possible degree of present happiness. To know that, when life shall terminate, our existence will be perpetuated in a higher sphere; that intellect shall be eternally expanded by fresh accessions of knowledge; that the sympathies shall increase with enlightened ardour, and be exercised by multiplied objects; that the virtuous associations of earth shall be purified and recommended;

that we are the objects of the divine solicitude and protection, and regenerated and exalted by his love; are sufficient to infuse present delight, or allay painful apprehension. The prospective objects of Christianity thus unite with its more immediate operations. But though its ends are thus effulgent, the nature of the means by which they are proposed to be accomplished, renders them still more credible and certain.

Had Revelation only amused the fancy with rhapsodies of future exaltation; had it declared no conditions, and required no obedience, and effected nothing but the expansion of eager hope and impetuous desire, there would have been no visible and rational connection between the cause and the effect,—between the proposition and its result. It would have been a matter of imagination rather than reason. But its first principle rests on a matter of individual consciousness and universal experience. It declares that which has been attested by the collective generations of humanity—that the heart of man is evil,—that evil incurs punishment and induces misery, and that unless it be removed, the consequence cannot be averted. Christianity therefore proposes to renovate man, and emancipate him from spiritual degradation. But it does terminate externally; it is not a code of mere outward morality,—a specious mantle to conceal defects. It pierces beyond the shell of extrinsic decorum, and penetrates to the latent source of action. It demands an internal conversion from wickedness, and a restoration of the image and likeness of God in the human heart; and that evil should be shunned, because of its turpitude, as well as its consequences. It implies, indeed, a spiritual resurrection,—an extinction of the corruptions of the natural man.

Now we know by ordinary experience, that certain evils induce wretchedness. The bloated face and quivering hand are the rewards of intempe-

rance; debauchery emaciates the frame, and increases the flame of turbid desire, while it has destroyed the ability of detestable gratification. Deceit is punished by contempt, fraud is deprived of liberty, revenge destroys its own security, and injustice is tortured by inward conscience or outward execration. To refrain from such abominations contributes to moral happiness. But Christianity not only would prevent the act, but extinguish the passion; not only prohibit commission, but subdue the inclination. When the fountain is pure, the stream must be limpid. Thought and desire, in the secret depth of their origin, are the objects of the purifying influence of Christianity; and if they be not thus renewed, the whole man is dead in the estimation of Omiscience.

Between the end and the means, the happiness and its materia, there is a visible connexion, and a mutual concordance. The one naturally produces the other, and they are thus closely allied as cause and effect. There is, however, an intervening power by which the result may be prevented, and that is found in the resistance and perversity of man. But we have not to consider the intervening agent, but the cause and the end, or the object and intended influence of Revelation.

To this, what can Infidels object? The designed end of Revelation is demonstrably good, and the intermediate results, as modified by human agents, are not to be connected with the primary object and inherent character of the proposition itself. We have only to determine whether Christianity, cherished in the heart, and made the director of thought and action, would produce the intended result; and from a previous brief statement of its solemn and piercing requisitions, an affirmation must be declared, for it admits of no denial, unless some of the most forcible moral demonstration are resisted and despised.

This inference is indeed independent of the historical evidence by which the Christian Revelation is sustained. The mind is exalted above the sphere of mere natural fact, and the moral and intellectual perceptions are enabled to decide without an immediate interposition of physical testimony. We do not underate historical attestation, or wish to set moral inference a task of excursive and penetrating conjecture. But we demand the position, that as Infidels would infer the moral unfitness of Revelation from the mere appearance of historical discrepancy, so we infer that what is true in its morals is most probably true in its physical facts. Synthetical investigation is perfectly legitimate in such a case; and the deduction from the spiritual excellence to the historical truth of the Gospel is valid and convincing.

What then is the candid and rational inference from the object of Revelation? Are infidel banter and evasion to be heard in preference to historic truth and moral evidence; and a proposition to be rejected,—not because it is untrue, not because its influence is injurious, not because it darkens and distracts the prospects and happiness of man,—but because it disagrees with some morbid or undisciplined inclination? Let justice and reason give the reply.

WHY ARE YOU AN INFIDEL?

By the Rev. W^m. Newland, A.M.

B. Why are you an Infidel?

Inf. I am an unbeliever because it is better to be a wise man than fool.

B. Is then the rejection of Christianity, of itself, a proof of superior wisdom, information, and ability?

Inf. You know Christianity commands men to believe the Gospel, whether true or false. Now if I must believe it, what is the use of my examining into its truth?

B. You are not required to believe

the Bible, or any part of it, if untrue. You must first ascertain whether the Bible be the word of God, by the established laws of evidence; and, having decided this point, you must next employ your understanding in exploring the truths which it contains, and apply them to practical purposes. Do you think a judge or jury renounce their reason in believing the evidence of facts submitted to their decision after laborious investigation? Does the chemist renounce his reason in confiding in the truth of facts demonstrated by experiment? Does the historian renounce his reason in crediting facts on human testimony, when he has ascertained their truth by patient induction? If submission to the truth, demonstrated by evidence, be a renunciation of reason, then is Christianity opposed to reason.

Inf. Is not Christianity a substitute for reason, and as such subversive of reason?

B. It might, with as much truth, be affirmed, that in navigation, the chart, the compass, or the stars, are a substitute for reason and inimical to its exercise and application; these things are subversive of conjecture, they are pregnant with danger to mistakes and errors; but so far from being dangerous to reason, they are the only means by which the mariner can, with safety and success, pursue his course on the mighty deep. Is a sign-post subversive of reason in giving the traveller correct information of his route? On the same principle Divine Revelation is not inimical to reason in bringing life and incorruption to light, in affording information as to the way of attaining peace with God, the remission of sin, emancipation from its power, and an entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. Those who imagine that Revelation invades the province of reason, do not know what reason is. If a line of one yard will not fathom some parts of the ocean, a line of fifty or a hundred may. Would

any one, from this, conclude that there was any opposition or contradiction between these two lines, because the one was longer than the other? And who, in this case, would act most naturally, the man who employed the long or the short line? There are certain truths which reason may discover by the contemplation and study of the works of God, there are other truths not contained in the volume of nature, which it is the province of God to reveal by means supernatural. Now the human mind, in relation to these truths, is in nearly the same condition as a person with regard to a book of which he knows not a single character; or, to speak more accurately, it is in the same state, as to the mind of God, as one person would be in reference to the mind of another, were he left to gather it from a blank sheet of paper.

Inf. I will look to reason alone as my guide.

B. Reason, to distinguish truth from error, must be furnished with the means of forming its decisions. The judgment arrives at truth by comparison, and reason is only the faculty of judgment employed in a series of comparisons. Now in all comparisons, the things compared must be present to the mind. By sin, man has been brought into a new state; and the question to be solved is, how he can be delivered from the power and punishment of sin. This question philosophy has not been able to answer: she has devised no means of emancipating man from sin and misery—its invariable concomitant and punishment. The researches of heathen philosophers were directed to those objects, and after they had expended in the inquiry all that human ingenuity could devise, they ended just where they began, leaving man the hopeless slave of sin.

Inf. Has the Gospel reclaimed any from the power of sin? Has it supplied any incentives to virtue? Has it made the impure chaste, the votaries

of excess temperate, the thief honest, the passionate meek, the revengeful forgiving, the idle industrious, the blasphemer pious and devout, the spendthrift frugal, the careless thoughtful and provident, the cruel humane, the churlish and niggardly, liberal and bountiful? Has Christianity changed the abode of discord into a peaceful habitation?

B. It has accomplished these objects in the case of thousands and tens of thousands; and you must have witnessed some of these results, if you are much conversant with human life. Philosophy did nothing for the mass of mankind; its light, such as it was, was restricted to a chosen few. But it is the glory of Christianity that it is adapted to the poor as well as the rich; and has, in fact, done more for the poor than for the rich. The founder of Christianity preached the Gospel to the poor, and commanded his disciples to do the same. The man who believes the Gospel, can look to God as his father and his friend. He is persuaded, on the best foundation, that all things are his, and that nothing can harm him in following that which is good. Man, degraded by sin, is nearly on a level with the brutes, if not below them; he is a stranger to every thing but sordid, and sensual, and earthly pleasures: man, renovated by the grace of God, is elevated in the rank of being, rendered susceptible of the purest pleasures, holds communion with the Author of his being, and is a co-operator with God in his plan of love and mercy for the salvation of a lost world. When he suffers, he regards his sufferings as paternal and salutary chastisement, administered with wisdom for his good; when he is left of any earthly stay, he rests secure on the Rock of Ages; when his mind is distracted with anxiety, in casting his care upon God, he is filled with serenity and peace; when he dies, he views death as an introduction to everlasting life;

when his ashes are consigned to the grave, he indulges the hope of a blessed resurrection; when he leaves his wife and his helpless children, he commits them to the Husband of the widow and the Father of the fatherless; and when a few short years have rolled away, he hopes to meet them in heaven. These are a few of the blessings of Christianity. What has Infidelity to confer?

Inf. Infidelity is fraught with many advantages in giving enlargement and freedom of thought, in leaving the old beaten track of our fathers, in emancipation from prejudice, superstition, enthusiasm, fanaticism, methodism, and from all fear of consequences in acting as we may feel inclined. A man cannot live in sin and enjoy the happiness of Christianity, but it is the peculiar excellence of Infidelity not to think any thing sinful, and, of course, to be under no fear or restraint of any kind. Some of our chief speakers teach that men, if they are Infidels, are not sinners in being liars, thieves, deceivers, and in abandoning themselves to every species of vice. This is called following nature, which they consider the very essence of virtue. Now this is my chief reason for being an Infidel. I wish to act, in all cases, as I feel disposed, without the fear of a future reckoning.

B. "And this is the condemnation, that men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil." As to superstition, it must not be confounded with pure and genuine religion, for superstition, as the very word imparts, is something over and above true religion, some human increment or addition, something which God has not required or commanded. As to security from fear, the Christian has a decided advantage over the Infidel. What has he to fear who exercises himself in maintaining always a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man? In freedom from prejudice, and in mental en-

largement, the Christian is still superior to the Infidel, who is, in principle, the slave of his appetites and passions, who believes whatever is uttered to the prejudice of Christianity with implicit confidence and without any inquiry, and whose whole life is spent, not in examining Christianity, or the claims and evidences of Christianity, but in starting difficulties, in collecting objections, in spreading misrepresentation and slander, in putting questions and in making no attempt at their solution, and, in one word, in seeking for an apology for impiety, profaneness, blasphemy, and vice. Of Infidels it may be said, "by their fruits ye shall know them;" their lives, to every thinking and reflecting mind, are an antidote to their principles.

Inf. Can you aver that all Infidels are addicted to vice?

B. I am far from saying there are no exceptions, but then, I believe, they are few. But if they are free from gross vices, they are not free from the more refined; — vanity, self-conceit, pride, envy, malice, ambition, self-sufficiency, inordinate love of applause, a contempt of all who embrace Christianity: needless activity in pursuing honours and riches as the chief good, are vices very common with the more refined Free-thinkers, as they call themselves. I never yet saw an Infidel who did not think himself very knowing and intelligent, however low he might be in intellect and acquirement. But were Infidels wholly free from blame, as respects their duties as men and members of society, as to their duty towards God, they are, in principle, wholly regardless. It is no part of their creed to fear, love, honour, and obey the Maker of all things.

Inf. Is it not enough that a man act his part well as a member of the community?

B. Certainly not. It might as well be said it is enough for a servant to behave well towards his fellow-ser-

vants, but be wholly devoid of all respect for his master, and to treat all his commands with neglect or scorn. Would you choose such a person for your servant?

Inf. I certainly would not. May not an Infidel be saved if as good a man as a Christian?

B. As good a man as a Christian, who loves and fears God, he cannot be, as the love of God enters not into the virtues of an Infidel. Besides, no man can be saved for his works, unless those works are commensurate with the demands of the law.

Inf. What is the use of believing?

B. What is the use of medicine unless it be received? What is the use of redemption unless it be accepted? What is the use of a substitute if his services are rejected? How can forgiveness be realized unless its exercise is preceded or accompanied in the pardoned offender with a sense of guilt? How can the love of Christ dying for the ungodly operate as an incentive to obedience, unless we conceive ourselves indebted to his death as the price of our redemption?

Inf. Are good works then excluded?

B. They are not excluded as fruits of faith, as evidences of love to God, as the duty which we owe to him as his creatures, and as his new creation, but they are excluded as the basis of pardon, the ground of acceptance and justification.

Inf. Does not this new scheme relax the claims of the law? and is it not calculated to make men think lightly of moral duties?

B. This is the same objection which the apostle Paul anticipated to the doctrine, where he says, in his epistle to the Romans, "Do we then make void the law through faith?" To which he replies, "God forbid;" we establish the law. The law continues, in all its latitude, as a rule of life, though not as a ground of pardon; and its claims are strengthened by a sense of obligation. And how power-

fully must the love of Christ operate when it is conceived that while we were enemies he died for us? If we feel it a duty to obey God, how much must this feeling be strengthened in his delivering us from the wrath to come, by a gratuitous and unmerited exercise of mercy? The mind of the believer is placed under the dominion of love than which there is not a more powerful principle. Then examine Christianity in all its bearings, and it will be found a rational system, equally honourable to God and beneficial to man.

Inf. I am inclined to give it a cordial examination. I wish to know how to proceed.

B. Pray to God to enlighten your mind to perceive the truth, and to enable you to embrace and read the Bible with patience, diligence, and candour. It will speak for itself. It will soon strike you as no human invention, but as the unsearchable wisdom of God. When you meet with difficulties seek for an explanation of those who have thought on the subject. Instead of reading to find faults or to detect discrepancies and contradictions, which are, after all, but apparent, read to understand, and use all the means within your reach to enlighten your judgment, to solve difficulties when they occur, and come to no party conclusion against any statement; persevere, and light will break in upon your path, if you seek the truth in love and in simplicity.

MODERN FANATICISM.

We have before had occasion to revert to the prophetic evidence by which Revelation is sustained; and which is indeed a permanent miracle, an act of foreknowledge not to be accomplished without a supernatural interposition of Divine aid. But not only was Christianity attested by antecedent prediction, but its Founder pre-declared events which should be

witnessed by the church in future ages. The destruction of Jerusalem and the rise of anti-christ were the subjects of his prediction; the one was a matter of awful realization, and the other has had an abundance of striking illustrations. But in modern times we do not remember to have heard of any more glaring attempt at cheat than that by which the present period is distinguished.

Although the incarnation and actual appearance of Jesus Christ are sustained by a multitude of irrefragable evidences, more numerous, cogent, and probable, than almost any other historical event, still some victims of insanity have arisen by whom the previous fact is denied, and who affirm that the Redeemer never appeared in the world till the present time. A pretended Messiah is, we understand, at present in the flesh, and has succeeded in persuading some of the authenticity of his character and mission. Of course the received Gospels must be false and incredible, while the modern impostor endeavours to prove his veracity. Of his doctrines we know nothing, and should be sorry to waste time in such an inquiry. But we conclude that he is stimulated by madness or villainy to prove, by implication, the truth of that Revelation which he attempts to subvert.

When Infidelity is making strenuous efforts to extend its dark domain, and the deluded or designing attempt to deceive others, we cannot help being surprised at the indifference with which such endeavours are treated by Christians in general. We are not apprehensive respecting the final triumph of religious truth, nor do we imagine that Infidelity has any thing intrinsically powerful to stand on. But specious falsehood may have the ability to deceive the more ignorant and unwary, and ought, therefore, not to be allowed to pass without exposure and condemnation. No better ground do Infidels wish to sow in than that of ignorance,—ignorance of the moral

and historical testifications of Christianity. That turbid spirit which inquires that it may reject and disdain, is found principally among those half-informed or destitute of knowledge; and it is only by supplying sound information,—by diffusing, to the uttermost, the genuine principles of religious intelligence and sound rationality that an antidote will be found.

Christians have an onerous duty to perform to their more ignorant brethren; for still does the immutable commandment remain—to go and teach all men. They have not only direct instruction to convey, but also opposing error to remove. The intellectual appetite so universally abroad should be supplied with proper food, or else it will become morbid and destructive. Human means must be applied in co-operation with the influence of Divine Providence; and if we have been forewarned by Divinity itself of the dangers which should impend in the latter days, should not the solemn truth stimulate to increased vigilance and unceasing solicitude for the spiritual welfare of our fellow-creatures?

But there must be a union of two modes in the attempted extension of religion and repression of error. Religious spiritual lives must be united with more external profession or activity; and while we declare our faith we must demonstrate its excellence in a blameless and charitable life. We are informed, that if men shall see our good works, they shall be allured to glorify the Father who is in heaven: while, on the converse, if a mere profession of Christian faith be connected with worldliness and rapacity, we shall justly incur the charge of hypocrisy, and destroy the power of recommending religion by its visible effects and excellence. We are no enthusiasts or admirers of rhapsodical piety which is generally soon consumed by the intensity of its own heat. But of one thing we are convinced, that religion is too extensively a frigid assent

of the understanding, and not a glowing and active principle of the heart. Unless, however, principle be united with action, charity, and its endless graces, with an enlightened faith, we shall incur the condemnation of those who know the Redeemer's will but do it not, and our imagined belief, with the hopes which it may be allowed occasionally to inspire, will abandon us in the hour of death and in the day of judgment.

THE PULPIT OBSERVER.

THE REV. DR. STYLES,

At Tonbridge Chapel, Somers' Town.

ON Tuesday the Course of Lectures proposed by "The Christian Instruction Society," was commenced by the Rev. Dr. Styles. The following is a faint abstract of one of the most powerful and eloquent sermons that we ever remember to have heard delivered; and the character and force of which was highly calculated to give a check to that Atheistic delusion which is being propagated under the name of "Co-operation."

Dr. Styles selected as a text Psalm xlviii. 14: "For this God is our God, for ever and ever." After alluding to the prevailing inquiries relative to the social condition of man, Dr. Styles remarked that the working classes, though raised to a considerable degree of mental improvement, had not obtained enlarged and comprehensive views on some of the most important subjects affecting their happiness. Of this, there were many men who wished to take advantage; and who attempted to dazzle the imagination of the more uninformed by the feigned results of visionary theories. These men would destroy all existing institutions, and out of the chaos which they made pretended that their new creation should arise. On the principle of demoralizing necessity—and that man was the passive victim of circumstance, was this new state of things to be erected. Such was the theory proposed by Mr. Owen, who, were it not for his Atheistical materialism, might be regarded as an amiable enthusiast.

But when Atheism was made the very foundation of a system; when politics and morals were to be determined by Atheism; then indeed was there cause for alarm and suspicion; nor could we safely entrust the guidance of a nation to those who denied the truth and obligations of Revealed Religion. If we imagined that the Atheist was really influenced by some philanthropy, could we suppose that he was calculated to be the restorer of social happiness?

Dr. Styles then read an extract from Mr. Owen's writings, which declared, that man's character was formed for him by some extraneous or independent power; that he was the creature of circumstances, non-responsible, and impelled by necessity!

Now allowing that the co-operative system was fraught with all the advantages which were described, it was impracticable on the proposed ground; it could not be realized where religion was rejected. But we must reason with the sophists, and take them on their own ground. The very assumption of the individual who proposed this plan ought to awaken distrust and disgust. Atheism was the result of some strange conjuncture of influences. It was a complete and awful anomaly of reason; for there were certain principia in which mankind were all agreed. The connection between cause and effect was universally perceived by intuition. Cause was that which produced or changed existence. The mind, on witnessing an effect, involuntarily asked what was the cause, the originating impetus, the power which produced a visible or conscious result. The necessity and existence of adequate causation was indeed a truth demonstrated by the testimony of sense and experience. Existence, or change of existence, could not be detached from a cause; and he who denied this was incapable of reasoning. In speaking, for instance, every man exhibits himself as a cause. If the voice were heard, it was known to have issued, by volition, from a previous organized cause; and was recognized as a distinct and indubitable effect. Now this simple and evident truth the sophistry of Atheism attempted to destroy; and the attempt had its source in the baseness of the heart, however unknown or latent. Athe-

ism was a moral phenomenon, revolting, portentous, and awful! It violated the principles of nature, obscured the judgment, and indurated the heart. Reason could never produce such a monster as an Atheist. The very name conjured up the thought of something fearful and terrific in the mind. The denial of God destroyed every idea requisite to moral and intellectual pleasure; for his supposed absence would cover the face of nature with primeval gloom. Could an Atheist, therefore, be regarded as efficient to ameliorate the social plan? Could he be trusted with any power to modify the institutions of society, or influence the destiny of man? What must we infer of his understanding? The dogmas of Atheism deduced that all the universe was created and governed by chance; what reliance could be placed on those who went thus in defiance of demonstration; who maligned our faith, and ridiculed our reading the existence of Deity in every visible object of his creation?

Dr. Styles then proceeded to examine Mr. Owen's views as to the formation of character. According to the system of the latter, the character which a man acquired was not his own, and for the impulse of which he was not responsible. An atomic combination of matter, which was represented by the term organization, or man, received impressions from some extraneous agents which it could neither modify or resist, and which made his character just whatever it might happen to be. But what could be thought of the system of him who attempted the formation of character without motive? Not a spark of rationality was there in this wild and extravagant hypothesis; and if the belief of the established system of morals was thus to be subverted, mankind would lose by the change and curse their benefactors. It was impossible to form virtuous characters without piety, or piety without accountability. Co-operation, therefore, on the principles of Atheism—or that which denied or tended to subvert the source of moral authority, was impossible and insane. Some had endeavoured to shield the system of Owen from the charge, and demonstrated consequences of Atheism: but its general feature was, no religion at all; though its pretended

liberality might resemble that of the French revolutionists, one of whom said, that if religion were any thing more than a philosophical abstraction, if it were made the foundation of morality, no opinion could be more injurious to society! In this the Atheistic spirit of co-operation concurred; for it had been declared, that "even the robber had not the power to form or restrain the motive which actuated him to crime." Let such principles be examined and traced to their conclusion.

In the proposed system, the only character of man was that of an automaton; he had life but no moral power; and resembled the gesticulating puppet that was moved by wires. This was Atheistic materialism; this was the doctrine of no motive which was now publicly avowed and defended. Man's life was represented as directed without his consent, and its character dependant on his organization; and whether good or bad, he must obey its tyrannical impulses! Whence, however, should come the power to battle this terrific and gloomy necessity! Could the proposed system expand the mind? Could it produce that which did not correspond with its principles? Could chance generate permanent and beneficial results? Did men "gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles?" When rectitude was disregarded, nothing but appetite and passion caused or directed action.

If the scheme were true, all men would be governed or urged by their passions and appetites,—by impulses which they were not required to examine or repel. In such a state of moral depravity, what should make seduction or adultery regarded and avoided as crimes? What should be known of human integrity, what prevent the friend from being betrayed, or the enemy from being consigned to destruction? From what Atheism had exhibited of its nature and tendency, what would a community of such beings resemble? How would the government conduct itself? Religion induced a sense of rectitude; and God was the source of moral obligation. But this would Atheism destroy and reverse; as in the governments of Caligula and Robespierre. The character of the subjects would be likewise modified by that of their governors. Right would not be known;

overreaching or violence would prevail; wives would be abandoned or seduced; and children,—those who were not thrown under a hedge, poisoned, or dashed on the stones,—would grow up in the nature of fiends! Such were the results, when Atheism began its co-operation in France. What crimes were then not perpetrated, and what bitterness and distress unknown! It might hence be perceived that Atheism was a sanguinary and desolating creed. "Co-operate," said Dr. Styles, "by all means, but co-operate on Christian principles."

The doctor then observed that a belief in the being and perfections of God was productive of the highest happiness which we could enjoy. The idea which they first brought to the mind respecting the Deity was capable of consoling and affording hope. His existence was illustrated by every object in the visible universe, which the Atheist must suppose to have been produced by an unknown hand. The greatness of His nature was declared by the radiance of the ardent sun, the light of the silvery moon, or by those countless stars, differing in magnitude and brilliance, and, as the suns of other systems, shedding effulgence on other worlds: while through the splendour and beauties of nature we might ascend to that dread Being who summoned all into existence. We might elevate the mind to Him, and in humble delight adore and love Him, for though self-existent, immense, and eternal, his mercy and goodness equalled his majesty. But the display of his natural perfections was eclipsed by the further disclosures of Revelation. Let us contemplate the spotless purity displayed on Calvary, and raise our admiration to the highest pitch.

Dr. Styles then alluded to the relative influences of Religion and Atheism. We might shudder when we beheld the results of Atheism. All must be confusion, horror, and darkness, where this prevailed. But in the Son of Righteousness the Christian beheld an object of adoration, constantly expanding the prospect of felicity. Under Him, all were the subjects of holy affection, all bound together by kindred sympathies as the children of one merciful and adorable God. Great indeed was the moral influence of Christianity. Every object was contemplated with delight,

and every dictate of revealed duty was obeyed, for every being was governed by one who ruled only to bless.

But how opposite was the tendency of the Atheistic system! Instead of making its victims rise from the degradation of brutes to the dignity of thinking beings, it led them to occupy the eminence which Vice allotted to her agents, who, perverting their talents, resembled putrescent masses of shining corruption, which generate a pestiferous light, and were then extinguished for ever! "I would sooner," said the Rev. Gentleman, "be deprived of that which is the distinction of rational nature, and have the slabbered chin and vacant eye of the idiot, become an intermediate something between a man and a brute—than descend to that awful prostitution to evil which marks some pretending philosophers."

In reference to the moral effects of Atheistic co-operation, Dr. Styles observed that the official report of the state of Lanark described its members as in a worse state of wretchedness than any of the manufacturing districts visited by the parliamentary commissioners. After some forcible cautions addressed to the working classes, the doctor concluded, with an appropriate address, a most able and impressive Lecture.

of some communications with the Archbishop of Canterbury, he discontinued this vocation, and re-entered the University preparatory to receiving ordination. This, however, was subsequently refused on account of his previously officiating without ordination. At length Mr. Abbott determined on separating altogether from the establishment, and he has recently opened a place of worship in the metropolis.

The present work details his reasons for quitting the church, and offers a number of considerations to justify his conduct and dislikes. The book, as the title indicates, contains a history of the Roman and English hierarchies, and refers to the different rites and ceremonies of the present established church. As a history, it contains some valuable facts and exhibits some research. But from the events under which it appears to have been written, there are frequent displays of personal feeling which cannot be admired or justified. Mr. Abbott warmly disapproves of the imposition of rites and ceremonies, feasts and fasts, as infringing the privilege of tender consciences. It must be confessed, however, though he may have been treated with more harshness than should have been inflicted on an eager young man who commenced preaching in 1821, that the difficulties he has encountered from perhaps over-scrupulosity were of his own creation. He surely knew the laws by which the church in such matters was regulated; and if he wished to enter her pale as a clergyman, he should have submitted to those laws at first, which he was afterwards inclined to obey. But it seems that he had an intention to attempt a reform before he was refused ordination; and that he thought he could effect his object better by being united with her members.

Whether such a reformation as Mr. Abbott proposes is required, it is not the object of our pages to discuss or inquire. That the church is not infallible, we suppose all protestants will declare or acknowledge; and that some advantageous modification might be effected in her concerns we do not hesitate to assert. But because there is room for the establishment to be improved in its spirituals and seculularities, we cannot subscribe to

REVIEW.

A History of the Roman and English Church Hierarchies; with an examination of the Assumptions, Abuses, and Intolerance of Episcopacy; proving the Necessity of a Reformed English Church. By JAMES ABBOTT, A.B. Simpkin & Marshall.

THIS work appears to have originated in the following manner. Mr. Abbott published in 1821, a work against what he imagined to be the corruptions of the church; but withdrew it on account of the opposition which it excited among the clergy. Shortly afterwards he came into possession of a dilapidated chapel, in which he effected repairs and preached, having been previously a member of Cambridge University. In consequence

that violent vituperation in which Mr. Abbott has sometimes indulged. Her working clergy are men who include much of piety and learning, and who do not deserve to be mixed up with wholesale abuse; and though in former ages some of her prelates may have displayed a spirit of despotism which Christians must always deprecate, still that she has effected much good, it would be unfair and bigoted to deny. Among her clerical members have been men by whom human nature was honoured, and from whom mankind are yet deriving extensive benefit.

For our own parts, we should like to see the affairs of the establishment so modified as to increase the good feeling between her and those who dissent from her pale. In doctrine both parties are nearly identical, and, from a pretty extensive observation, we can assert that their object and zeal are the same. We hope that the time will ere long arrive when all barriers shall be removed, and brethren dwell together in unity.

In conclusion, we trust that Mr. Abbott's book will be read. It will supply some historical information and direct attention to a subject certainly worthy of inquiry.

Outline of the Rational System of Society, founded on demonstrable Facts, demonstrating the Constitution and Laws of Human Nature, &c.

THE rational system proposed in a "Synopsis" which has been forwarded to us under the above title, owes its existence to the celebrated Mr. Owen, who, it is pretty well known, has, for some years past, been attempting the introduction of a brilliant epoch of human felicity, in which want, vice, and "all the ills which flesh is heir to," should be known no more, and man arise at once to the character and condition of an angel. The proposed results are certainly on a "large scale," and much more extensive than the means seem calculated to produce. But Mr. Owen has taken human nature to pieces, ascertained its component parts, and now offers a panacea for universal moral and social disease. The *philosophy* of the "System" hath certainly a rather *verbal* appearance, and is composed more of

idea than reality. "Creature of circumstances," "results of organization," and several other terms equally sublime and mysterious, form the vocabulary of this singular and astonishing system. Knowledge is opposed to ignorance, which latter is alone inimical to these new and illustrious views, and which of course includes a befitting quantum of that article, politely denominated, Superstition, for which Mr. Owen bids his readers understand Christianity. This must be banished before the said wonderful system can begin to operate, and then we are to be astounded by the mighty effects of human rationality!

But Mr. Owen hath vouchsafed a catalogue of what is requisite to this high and dazzling felicity. Man is a collection of organic atoms, which are influenced by external circumstances. The hypothetical "circumstances" from without have a vast power over the combination of particles which compose the *genus homo*, so great, indeed, that the character of the human "organization" is in all cases determined by extrinsic accidents. If those circumstances happen to be good, the "organization" will be dignified and happy; and, if the reverse, the said "organization" will be vicious and miserable. Then comes the sweeping deductions:—

"No one shall be responsible for his physical, intellectual, or moral organization.

"No one shall be responsible for the sensations made on his organization, by external circumstances.

"No one shall be responsible for the feelings and convictions within him, and which to him are the truth while they continue"!

How truly enviable a state of society! Let us suppose this to be the established code of action; and that the members of such a community acted up to their creed. Suppose a human "organization" to be operated upon by certain "circumstances" of which he is the creature, and which are made to operate from another human "organization," or man. Suppose the first organization to be greatly irritated at the second, and that not being "responsible for the sensations made by external circumstances," he should so attack the second organization, or exciting circumstance, that the said second gentleman should immediately de-

part this life, or sustain some "grievous bodily harm." Now what should prevent frequent occurrences of such a kind, if there is no power to punish, and no principle to restrain? Mr. Owen and his illuminated disciples may dream that the coherence of society would exist in spite of this proposed destruction of accountability; but we trust an extensive experiment will never be tried, unless it be the universal desire of man to fall at once into confusion and barbarity, and renounce for ever the prospects of civilization.

The whole of this scheme proceeds on the assumption that man is nothing but a material being, destined to exist for a few years, and then be extinguished for ever. He has no motive but entire and radical selfishness, and no principle of action but that which is generated or varied by fortuitous circumstances. And yet creatures, thus subject to contingent impulses which they may indulge without responsibility, and with characters originally diversified by nature, are to be brought to live in a higher state of harmony and happiness than could be anticipated from a body of regenerated Christians, acting under the highest and most influential obligations of morality and religion! Thus, where the power and purity of motive should be multiplied, their actual diminution is alleged as a sufficient cause for a more extended and permanent result. In England and America communities have been formed, on the main principle, we believe, of rejecting religion; and their failure has demonstrated their weakness of cohesive tendency.

It might have been expected, when an attempt was made to propagate such a doctrine as the non-responsibility of man, and his entire subserviency to circumstances, that its data should have been previously attested by universal experience; that character was solely and exclusively formed by extraneous causes; and, consequently, that similarity of circumstance would produce similarity of character. Yet where has the experiment been tried, and the result obtained? If man be nothing but an organization of matter, subject to the action of other material agents and combinations, identity of cause must produce identity of effect.

If the contact and attrition of matter, under its various modifications, be the origin of moral purity or turpitude, by what strange anomaly is it that two beings, placed under circumstances almost identical in detail, educated by the same parent, fed at the same board, and urged to adopt similar principles, should so frequently have been antipodes in moral character and inclination, and that similar external causes should have produced such contradictory results! It were as easy to make the collective faces of mankind be identical in feature and expression, as to attempt the production of character which Mr. Owen proposes to effect by the action of "circumstance" on "organization." Circumstances have never yet produced the result which he would lead us to anticipate. He acknowledges that previous habits will prevent such an immediate result; which is an admission that there is something which circumstances cannot entirely control. Why, then, with such an obvious truth before him, will Mr. Owen endeavour to subvert the morals of society by urging a doctrine which is evidently fallacious, and attempting to persuade men that they are irresponsible, and may act according to every impulse which their submissive organization may feel! Right and wrong, virtue and vice are synonymous, and as the one cannot be naturally loved, so the other cannot be reasonably hated and avoided.

We should be sorry to misinterpret the motives of any man who proposed the amelioration of human society, or to be insensible to the sufferings which many classes now endure. But goodness of intention do not justify a man's attempting to introduce that which, to better judges, because more impartial observers, must ever appear as deeply injurious to the best interests of humanity. Did Christianity produce its proper effect on the aspect of society; were its beams of charity and benevolence reflected from every heart, we should soon cease to hear of the horrors of want and the gloom of ignorance. Genuine religion is the only radical principle by which society will ever be permanently amended; and as this operates as an extending and influential cause, the external condition of mankind will gradually assume a cor-

responding effect. Mr. Owen is an enemy to Christianity and a materialist; and whatever powers he might otherwise possess to benefit the social relations of mankind, they are certainly now made dangerous by his assuming, as a first principle of his project that religion must be destroyed.

The above review was prepared previously to our being aware that Dr. Styles intended to take up the subject. We intend, however, to devote a few papers to the refutation of moral necessity.

POETRY.

AVARICE.

Who, that has viewed the varied face of life,
The bursting passion or the wild desire,
The eager chase of some elusive good,
Or disappointment shed her bitter tear ;
And mark'd the modes of intellectual man,
Scorned an impulse so debas'd and vile
As Avarice acting in the human heart,
And tainting ev'ry wish with lust of gold !
What is the aggregate of human crimes
Which justice threatens with the dreaded
sword ;
What is the robber whose nocturnal theft
Supplies the wants which he endur'd by day ;
What is the crimson'd steel in Murder's hand
Where dark revenge impelled the deadly blow ;
What the disgusting smile of calm Deceit,
Where oily goodness hides the heart of hell ;
When seen in contrast with that deeper sin—
That vice exclusive which o'erwhelms the man
And writes him fiend of Avarice ! There are
Some sins—alas too frequent and too deep—
That leave some nook for goodness in the
heart,
That let some faint and generous impulse glow,
That render wickedness thus incomplete,
And make its part-dominion insecure.
But Avarice each sympathy corrupts,
Each power within her horrid vortex draws,
As a quick whirlpool o'er the mouth of hell.
I saw the man by Avarice enslav'd—
His soul was in his face—his restless eye
Shot its keen ray o'er his pale sunken cheek.
He view'd each object as a means of gain
And Av'rice plann'd how each he might
possess.
The sun o'er nature's glowing beauties play'd,
And gave his beam to ev'ry grateful flower.
But here rapacity could find no charm !
The man of av'rice to his home return'd,
And want was supplicating at his gate

For food, a life of sorrow to sustain.
He roughly spurn'd the hungry trembling
wretch,
And bid him perish in his scanty rags !
I saw the infant he had sworn to guard
When death its widow'd mother snatch'd
away ;
And harsh unkindness soon the child expelled
To find a tomb deep in the rolling sea.
His tenants' little all was next consum'd,
That he his golden heap might still extend ;
And on a bitter cheerless world were thrown
The wife and father, and their little train.
How rich he grew, and how he grasp'd for
more,
And joy'd in turbid gladness o'er his gold !
But age stole on, and he began to dread
The pangs of want which he would ne'er
relieve,
His heart was gnaw'd by conscience and by
fear,
And hasten'd that which money could not stay.
His hour arriv'd, no cheering hope threw light
Amidst the gloom that wrapp'd his dreary bed ;
He groan'd with horror as the dart was rais'd,
And died despised by those who shar'd his store.
Then shall the sordid treasure be amassed
Where moth corrupts and theives break thro'
and steal ?
Shall goodness'neath a blasting influence droop
While grasping Avarice absorbs the heart ?
Shall man accumulate the maniac hoard,
And sink his life in dross that's left behind ?
O let the tender warning voice of Him
Who told of heaven's treasures, now be heard.
He bids the glowing sympathies of man
To lasting objects more refin'd ascend,
And shun the fleeting and fictitious good,
Oft sought in frigid, useless heaps of gold.
His kingdom sought, his providence believ'd,
And man, obedient to His truth and will,
Shall in this fleeting scene sufficient find,
And finding, bless the hand who gave enough.
Pride unexcited, mod'rate want supplied,
Shall bring contentment and a grateful heart,
The dearest prize that e'er descends on man,
While hope shall bliss discern beyond the
skies.

P.

REPERTORY OF FACTS, *Observations, and Intelligence.*

CONSOLATIONS AGAINST DEATH.

THIS life is only a prelude to eternity, where we are to expect another original, and another state of things; we have no prospect of heaven here but at a dis-

tance; let us therefore expect our last and decretry hour with courage. The last, I say, to our bodies, but not to our minds: our luggage we must leave behind us, and return as naked out of the world as we came into it. The day which we fear as our last, is but the birth-day of our eternity; and it is the only way to it.—*Seneca.*

NEW MODE OF RAISING FLUIDS.

A German paper contains a very long letter, addressed to the editor by a M. Antony Bernhard, in which he gives an account of an invention, which he has ultimately matured, for raising water or other fluids to any height that can be required for any useful purposes. The problem to be solved was—"To raise water, quicksilver, or any other fluid, without pumps or other mechanical contrivance, to any height required for useful purposes." This problem he has solved as follows:—"By the application of the pressure of the atmosphere, as an acting power, to the fluid to be raised; by the application of heat to produce the expansion, or rarefaction, and thereby a diminution of the specific gravity of the fluid, as the body to be raised; and, lastly, by the production of a vacuum within the apparatus and above the rising column of fluid, to take away the counter pressure." This invention, M. Bernhard says, will entirely supersede the steam-engine, which he says he shall be able to prove, as soon as he can make models of the different kinds of apparatus which will be necessary to perform the several functions of steam-engines.—*Lit. Gazette.*

ORDER AND DISORDER.

WERE mankind fully convinced that the Supreme Being who created them can alone accomplish for them the purpose for which they were created, which is their eternal happiness, to begin on earth, and to perfect itself in heaven, they would listen to those laws which Revelation has made known to them for its attainment, considering them as laws not to deprive them of real blessings and comforts, but gradually to confer them with everlasting

increase. Instead of a surrender of the mind and its affections to the Divine laws, and of persevering in the road which the finger of God has pointed out to them, men, like untoward children, prefer to wander through woods and forests, delighted with unknown tracks, and exposed to briars and thorns, to the poisonous berries of self-love, and to the envenomed bite of serpents and reptiles of the most noxious kind: such are the various unrestrained passions, the continual tormentors of those, who, endeavouring to surmount the temperate degree, in worldly enjoyments, lose that sweet relish, which a moderate participation of them, under the control of heavenly principles, can alone impart: it would be as easy for a tree to thrive with its root in the air and its branches in the ground, as for the happiness of man to attain to any degree of real progress by quitting its proper centre in God, and by burying, in earthly pursuits, the fruit-bearing blossoms of a mind organized for celestial contemplation, and the purest moral practice.—*Arbouin.*

THE LITURGY.

THE compilers of the Common Prayer Book, in the reign of Edward VI., were Dr. Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury; Dr. Goodrick, Bishop of Ely; Dr. Skip, of Hereford; Dr. Thirlby, of Westminster; Dr. Day, of Chichester; Dr. Holbeck, of Lincoln; Dr. Ridley, of Rochester; Dr. May, Dean of St. Paul's; Dr. Taylor, of Lincoln; Dr. Heyne, of Exeter; Dr. Redman, of Westminster; Dr. Cox, Almoner to King Edward VI.; and Dr. Robinson, Archdeacon of Leicester.—*Belle's Anecdotes of Literature.*

VIRTUE.

EVERY virtue hath two vices that close her up in curious limits, and if she swerve ever so little she steps into error:—Religion hath Superstition and Profaneness—Fortitude, Fear and Rashness—Liberality, Avarice and Prodigality—Justice, Rigour and Partiality—and so in others; which has occasioned some to define Virtue to be a medium between two extremes. Virtue is, in truth, a war, wherein a man

must be perpetual sentinel; — 'tis an obelisk which, though founded in the earth, hath a spire which reaches to heaven; — like the palm-tree, though it hath pleasant fruit it is hard to come at it — for the stem is not easy to climb. — *Owen Felltham.*

LORD EDWARD FITZGERALD.

AMONG those traits of character which adorned him as a member of social life, there is one which, on every account, is far too important not to be brought prominently forward in any professed picture of him, and this was the strong and pure sense which he entertained of religion. So much is it the custom of those who would bring discredit upon freedom of thought in politics, to represent it as connected invariably with lax opinions upon religion, that it is of no small importance to be able to refer to two such instances as Lord Edward Fitzgerald and the younger Emmett, in both of whom the freest range of what are called revolutionary principles was combined with a warm and steady belief in the doctrines of Christianity. — *Thos. Moore.*

TRUTH.

"Truth, though she is often wounded, always recovers in a short time." — *Dr. Johnson.*

TRUTH can never suffer from argument and inquiry; but may be essentially injured by the tyrannous interference of her pretended advocates. Impede her energies by the pains and penalties of law, and, like the Fame of Virgil, she will creep along the ground, diminutive in stature, and shrink with apprehension: — Give free scope to all her tendencies, and she will soon collect her might, dilate herself to the fulness of her dimensions, and reach the stars. — *Goakman's Selector.*

ADVANTAGES OF KNOWLEDGE.

As the power of acquiring knowledge is to be ascribed to reason, so the attainment of it mighty strengthens and improves it, and thereby enables it to enrich itself with further acquisitions. Know-

ledge in general expands the mind, exalts the faculties, refines the taste of pleasure, and opens numerous sources of intellectual enjoyment. By means of it, we become less dependant for satisfaction upon the sensitive appetites, the gross pleasures of sense are more easily despised, and we are made to feel the superiority of the spiritual to the material part of our nature. Instead of being continually solicited by the influence and irritation of sensible objects, the mind can retire within herself and expatiate in the cool and quiet walks of contemplation. — *R. Hall.*

GENERAL EDUCATION NOT A SOURCE OF INDOLENCE.

WHILE learning to read and write is a distinction, we may be the less inclined to work: but when every body learns to read and write, it is no longer a distinction. We must not neglect doing a thing immediately good from fear of remote evil; — from fear of its being abused. A man who has candles may sit up too late, which he would not do if he had not candles; but nobody will deny that the art of making candles, by which light is continued to us beyond the time the sun gives it to us, is a valuable art and ought to be preserved. — *Johnson.*

OSTENTATION.

He that boasteth, if he be not ignorant is at least inconsiderate, and knows little of the casualties which man is exposed to; if he had intrinsic worth, he would rather wait till the world had found it, than impatiently proclaim it; it is more true satisfaction for a man to know himself honest than for all the world to approve him so. Virtue is built upon herself, and we disgrace her work when we go about to seduce the voice of approbation. — *Owen Felltham.*

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